

# NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting  
September 17, 2003

A meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) was held on Wednesday, September 17, 2003, scheduled for 9:30 a.m., in the Town of Truckee Council Chambers, 10183 Truckee Airport Road, Truckee, California

Members Present:     \*Kerry Arnett, Drew Bedwell, Ann Guerra, Chet Krage, \*Linda Stevens,  
                              \*Josh Susman, Robin Sutherland

Members Absent:     None

Staff Present:        Dan Landon, Executive Director; Nancy Holman, Administrative Services  
                              Officer; Toni Perry, Administrative Assistant; Mike Woodman,  
                              Transportation Planner.

Standing Orders:     Chairman Susman convened the Nevada County Transportation Commission  
                              meeting at 9:32 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS: For discussion and possible action.

1.     Financial Reports: Period 13, July, August

Commissioner Krage, referring to Fund #5231, Vehicle Refurbishment/Replacement, asked if the uncommitted balance should be \$204,987.79 rather than \$21,294.14. Executive Director Landon stated that when the \$185,000 that has been loaned to the County is returned, it will be added to the uncommitted balance to bring the total to \$204,987.79.

2.     Correspondence.

Executive Director Landon noted that Caltrans will be providing copies of their comments on all their development projects in Nevada County and these comments will be included in correspondence as they were in this packet.

Chairman Susman noted for the record that he had some concerns regarding some of the letters from Caltrans commenting on projects in the Truckee area. He stated that he would discuss his concerns with staff at a later time.

3.     Legislative Update.

Executive Director Landon gave an update of the two bills the Commissioners were following: AB 813 was approved by the legislature and signed by the Governor and AB 1065 failed in Committee.

4.     Executive Director's Report:

Executive Director Landon stated that Grant Johnson, Prism Engineering, was scheduled to show a computer simulation of the roundabout concept being developed for the Idaho Maryland Road and East Main Street intersection, but that Mr. Johnson was delayed for an unknown reason.

Chairman Susman moved to agenda item number five since there were no questions regarding other items in the Executive Director's report.

5. Eastern Nevada County Triennial Performance Audit Status.

Executive Director Landon stated that several months past, the Commission had discussed the recommendations provided in the final triennial performance audit report for FY 1997-2000. Due to the change in transit contractors for the Town of Truckee, town staff recognized there would be a need to review the applicability of the recommendations in the performance audit. Alex Terrazas, Assistant to the Manager of the Town of Truckee was present to review the status on implementing the performance audit's recommendations.

Mr. Terrazas stated that there are only two recommendations that are outstanding: 1) Bring Dial-A-Ride into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. This will occur once the Transit Development Plan is implemented; and 2) Have a Charter Policy. This is currently in draft form.

6A. Caltrans District 3 - Project Status Report: Tom Brannon, Caltrans Project Manager.

Mr. Brannon stated that the two ways the state budget crisis is affecting Caltrans ability to deliver transportation projects: 1) There is not sufficient money to fund every project in the year the project is programmed, and 2) There is not sufficient staff resources to work on the projects. Caltrans managers do not have enough information to make decisions regarding project development and completion. Mr. Brannon stated that in the next few months Caltrans staff will need to be creative in order to get around some of the problems that will occur due to the budget crisis.

\*Commissioner Linda Stevens arrived.

Mr. Brannon reviewed his written report on the status of the projects in Nevada County. The following is a synopsis of some of those discussed:

- Nevada 20 Safety Realignment and Widening: On schedule and should be delivered on time.
- Dorsey Drive Interchange: Design staff is committed to start work in November. There is a two month delay which may follow throughout the entire schedule. Even with delay, construction will start in spring 2008.
- Widening of SR 49 from Wolf/Combie to Grass Valley: Design staff will not begin work until January 2004. It will be late December of this year before a realistic schedule for the PA/ED can be made based on how many resources are actually available. Also Caltrans needs to estimate how much of the dollars that are in the PS&E and Right of Way phases can be moved to construct a segment of the larger project.
- Widening and Shoulder Work from Pekolee Drive to Lime Kiln on 49: The original design of this project required the acquisition of the portion of two parcels. A Caltrans designer became creative with the alignment and was able to stay within the state's right-of-way and therefore eliminated the need to acquire the parcels or relocate utilities. Mr. Brannon pointed out that this was an example of the kind of creativity needed to get by hurdles that the lack of funding has created.

- Truckee Traffic Signals and Roundabouts: Mr. Brannon is now the Project Manager and is making progress on getting the Concept Approval Report signed for the roundabouts. He is still working with the Town of Truckee staff regarding the Financial Contribution Agreement.
- Truckee Bypass Mitigation: The Contract Acceptance is still planned for October 1, 2003. The Town paid for the additional funding needed for the completion of the ramps.
- Truckee Bypass Mitigation Planting: This project is ready to be listed, but the CTC has not voted funds for it.
- Relinquishment of Old Route 267 to the Town of Truckee: Construction completion was planned for October 1<sup>st</sup>, but will probably occur later in the month. The slowest step in this process is the hazardous waste issues along the route, particularly in the area just north and south of the railroad tracks.
- Bear River to Wolf Combie Widening Project: Modifications to the SR 49/Combie intersection and new signals are planned to be completed by the week beginning September 22<sup>nd</sup>. The new travel lanes are planned to be open by the end of the construction season in October. Final paving will be done in the next year.
- Brunswick Road Traffic Signal: Construction started early August and is proceeding along at a good pace and should be completed shortly.
- Mechanics Sub Shop at the Nevada City Maintenance Station: Staff down-scoped the job, but it still needs an additional \$700,000. This amount was requested for in the 2004 SHOPP cycle, but it is not expected.

Commissioner Krage, referring to the Highway 20 safety project, asked if a decision had been made regarding routing traffic on either the north or the south alignment. Mr. Brannon responded that a decision had not been made. After Caltrans received FHWA's approval to drop one of the alignments, maybe in a month or two, the public would be notified. Commissioner Krage stated that now that Caltrans was communicating more with the public, it was important to follow through with them. Commissioner Krage, referring to the Highway 49 widening of the shoulder project at Pekolee, asked how traffic would be maintained during construction in such a narrow corridor. Mr. Brannon responded that where there is a narrow traffic corridor, a Traffic Management Plan is developed by Caltrans to plan how traffic will be moved and what the hours of operation will be, etc.

Commissioner Susman asked if there was an opportunity for Caltrans to work with local jurisdictions to provide the "cozy" vehicles used in construction segments of the highway rather than use the California Highway Patrol. Mr. Brannon responded he would look at the "Cozy" Agreement, which is a statewide cooperative agreement with the Highway Patrol and Caltrans, to see what the possibilities are.

6B. SR 49 at La Barr Meadows Road Update: Robert Peterson, Caltrans Traffic Safety Engineer.

Mr. Peterson stated that the suggested solutions presented from last month's Commission meeting concerning the safety issues at the La Barr Meadows Road intersection, and Caltrans responses, were included in the agenda packet.

Commissioner Bedwell expressed his concern with Caltrans reluctance to change the striping in the La Barr Meadows Road area. The striping would convert the left turn pocket lane into a two-way left turn lane to provide a refuge area for a driver turning left from La Barr Meadows Road onto Highway 49 going south. Mr. Peterson responded that due to the type of surface of the road, restriping it would require a process that the Caltrans maintenance crews are unable to perform, and therefore would require contracting the job out. There are not funds available for such a contract. Also the Caltrans Traffic Operations Department is reluctant to have a refuge for vehicles to be in the middle of the highway that may cause more problems than it would solve. Restriping did not necessarily guarantee the safety problem would be solved. Caltrans maintenance division will install signs and flashing beacons at that location.

Commissioner Krage stated that within three hundred feet along Highway 49 at this location, there are five driveways and/or local roads connecting to the highway. A driver attempting to enter SR 49 from one of them has to contend with high-speed traffic on the highway, as well as, keep an eye on what is happening at the other access points. In the northbound direction, there is no sign alerting drivers to an intersection ahead. Mr. Peterson responded that Caltrans will install a sign. Commissioner Krage stated that on the Mountain Air Mobile Home Park side of the highway, there are two very wide encroachments with no striping on the pavement to indicate where to stop or where to queue up to make a left or right turn, and there is no stop sign. He stated that there were many things that could be done and that the voluntary ingress and egress closures may have to happen sooner than later. Mr. Peterson responded that if the County agreed, Caltrans could make a no-left turn at La Barr Meadows Road to force drivers to drive down to Alta Sierra or force them to turn right. Commissioner Krage stated that it was necessary to educate people to turn right from La Barr Meadows Road, go to Tall Pines, make a left, where there is a left turn pocket, in order to get on the other side of the highway, and then make a right turn and head south.

Commissioner Sutherland suggested to Mr. Peterson that the warning signs should state something comparable to "dangerous" or "hazardous intersections ahead". Mr. Robertson explained that the word "dangerous" has a legal connotation and cannot be used. Dangerous implies that there is something on the road that a normal prudent driver, driving safely, would still get in an accident. Commissioner Sutherland stated that it is a very "dangerous hazardous" area on the state highway. Mr. Peterson responded the accidents do not bear this out and drivers don't have to make a left turn. Commissioner Sutherland asked that if the word dangerous cannot be used, if there was another way to give a verbal heads-up that there are intersections ahead, rather than just saying, "Intersection Ahead". Mr. Peterson responded that Caltrans is installing a flashing beacon and an intersection warning sign right before La Barr Meadows Road in each direction. The yellow and black sign is a caution sign. Commissioner Bedwell stated he was not sure flashing lights were the answer. Mr. Peterson said it was a two-prong solution. Caltrans can do what they can do and motorists have the option to use alternate ways to get on Highway 49. Caltrans will do a signal study to see if the intersection meets any of the warrants for signal installation.

Commissioner Sutherland stated that another part of the problem that has not been addressed is the location where traffic converges from two lanes into one lane less than a quarter mile from where the five encroachments are, and where drivers speed up to get in front of the car ahead of them. Mr. Peterson responded that Caltrans would do a speed analysis in the area.

Chairman Susman questioned what the County could do to pursue a dialogue of voluntary closure of ingress and egress of private driveways and/or enforcing usage of a stop sign or a caution sign on the private roads. Mr. John Rumsey, Senior Engineer, County Department of Transportation, responded he could talk to County legal counsel to see if there were legal mechanisms available to do this. Also the County could talk to the owners of the private roads. He suggested that before closing off a

left turn at La Barr Meadows Road that the Board of Supervisors hold a public meeting to give people an opportunity to comment on this matter.

Commissioner Arnett stated that prohibiting left turns could be done during designated times as there are times when it is easier to make left turns than others.

Commissioner Stevens asked if there were a way to bring all five intersections into one place drivers could come out from instead of having to go down to Alta Sierra. Mr. Brannon responded that the major problem that prevents this from happening was lack of funding. Commissioner Stevens suggested using a barrier to force people to go to the safest way out onto Highway 49.

Chairman Susman asked Mr. Brannon to include updates on this safety issue in his monthly report and suggested that the County be the lead agency in addressing the issues and presenting possible solutions to Caltrans. Ann Marie Robinson, Caltrans planner, stated she would work with the County. Commissioner Bedwell responded he would work with both Ann Marie Robinson and John Rumsey and report their activities back to the Commission.

Arthur Johnston, a member of the audience, stated he was disturbed that the idea of using signs with the word "dangerous" was dropped. He stated that an amber sign that flashes did not do any good, but that a sign with words such as "treacherous intersection" would cause a driver to think and the idea should be pursued.

Commissioner Arnett stated he has seen other words used to alert drivers and suggested that legally acceptable wording could be found. Mr. Peterson noted that on Highway 20 outside of Nevada City, there are signs that say, "Entering Populated Area". This is a non-standard sign used where there are many ingress and egress driveways to alert drivers of traffic coming out onto or off of the highway.

Mr. Peterson stated Caltrans could shut the intersection down if it were dangerous, but that if it were "dangerous", it would be closed already.

Chairman Susman stated it was his expectation that by the next month's meeting there would be flashing lights installed or a time set for them to be installed, a traffic warrant study underway, and a report back from the ad hoc committee Commissioner Bedwell will be chairing.

Don Martin, Executive Director of Telecare, stated that as a professional driver, the best solution he has seen is to install a speed zone with a flashing light to slow traffic down.

Chairman Susman and John Rumsey discussed the need to get a speed limit at a legally enforceable level.

6C. Update on the SR 174 Transportation Concept Report. Marlon Flournoy, Caltrans Transportation Planner.

Mr. Flournoy stated he wanted to review what Caltrans envisioned for SR 174 over the next twenty years and to show how people can get involved in the process. The following is a synopsis of his presentation.

A Transportation Concept Report (TCR) describes development and the management of a route over a twenty-year period. Caltrans inventories the system and identifies deficiencies or problem areas along the route and develop concepts on how to solve those problems. In the TCR, Caltrans establishes a level of service first and then develops conceptual improvements that meet that level of

service. A TCR is a planning document, but does not provide funding. It is not an environmental document, but is used to initiate specific projects in the future. SR 174 is being used more than before as an alternative to SR 49, and therefore it is critical to try to make it safer, even though the terrain along the route does not offer much opportunity for improvement. Basically all of the concepts being developed are focused on traffic improvements and maintenance. For Segment 2 of the route, from the Nevada County line to Brunswick Road, Caltrans is focusing on paved turnouts. On Segment 3, many of the proposed improvements are focused on providing signage to alert motorists of upcoming turns. Caltrans is suggesting a traffic signal at Brunswick Road and 174.

Commissioner Stevens asked if Caltrans, in the TCR, automatically puts plans for shoulders for bicyclists. Mr. Flournoy responded they typically do, but it depended if there were sufficient right-of-way and the conditions supported a Class II bike lane. If there were enough shoulder and it was a safe area, a Class III bike lane would be suggested.

Mr. Flournoy noted that a traffic study was done in 2001 by NCTC and Nevada County for Brunswick Road, from SR 20 to 174, suggesting that a traffic signal be installed at Brunswick Road and 174. Caltrans does not know if it meets signal warrants, but the TCR will recommend a study to address this item.

Currently, Caltrans is getting ready to circulate a draft TCR to their staff. After incorporating staff comments, the draft document will be sent to the Commission and will be presented to the public. Once all comments are incorporated, the final report will be completed.

Commissioner Krage stated he believed that the County's General Plan target for LOS (Level of Service) in rural regions was "C", and noticed in Segment 3 of the TCR that Caltrans showed LOS D, 1 E. He questioned how Caltrans could bring the LOS to County standard. Mr. Flournoy responded that typically Caltrans determines their LOS standard by default in a rural area as a LOS D, and for an urban area, recommended a LOS E. However, if there are certain conditions that exist, Caltrans may decide to adjust the LOS. For SR 174, given the terrain, it would be difficult to achieve a LOS D because of the different factors that go into determining a level of service. Caltrans determines a LOS that they can be reasonably achieved. Commissioner Krage responded that this was a concept document and therefore the document should provide the path that would lead to keeping SR 174 at a LOS C consistent with the County General Plan.

Mr. John Rumsey stated that one of the County's comments to Caltrans, in reviewing one of their fact sheets, is that their traffic projections are higher than what the County model is predicting. Mr. Rumsey and Commissioner Krage briefly discussed the appropriate conceptual LOS to be indicated in the TCR. At the conclusion of the discussion, it was noted that there may need to be some clarification regarding LOS that would be consistent with the County's General Plan.

Chairman Susman questioned if Caltrans has sufficient right-of-way to address the issues of future bike lanes. Mr. Flournoy responded that with the level of document, Caltrans is not able to identify all locations where there might be adequate right-of-way for bike lanes in the future.

Commissioner Sutherland commented that the County is funding Title 3 monies for a trail corridor acquisition project in the County, and believed portions of SR 174 was included as one alternative for locating trails. She asked that Caltrans work with the County Planning Department so that planning for trails can be considered in the TCR.

Commissioner Krage stated that in the past, the Commission had discussed the idea of rerouting SR 174 from the intersection with Brunswick, and having it follow Brunswick down to the proposed

Dorsey Drive interchange. He asked if the TCR would look at this idea. Mr. Flournoy replied that in developing the TCR, Caltrans looks at the current state route, but if there were support to change the route, Caltrans would consider the idea to see how viable it would be.

Commissioner Krage asked if Caltrans would be looking at providing some safe turnout lanes. Mr. Flournoy responded in the affirmative. On Segment 2 of SR 174, there was only one location this could be done. There is not a lot of right-of-way to do any of these types of improvements.

Because of time constraints, Mr. Landon suggested that if the Commissioners had other comments, to submit them to staff who would forward them to Caltrans.

\*Chairman Susman adjourned the NCTC meeting at 10:45 a.m. in order to convene as the OPC.

\*Vice-Chairman Stevens reconvened the NCTC meeting at 1:30 p.m.

\*Commissioner Arnett and Chairman Susman were absent.

#### CONSENT ITEMS:

7. NCTC Minutes: August 20, 2003. *Approved.*
8. 2003/04 FY State Transit Assistance Apportionments: *Adopted the updated apportionment table as a basis for allocation from the State Transit Assistance Fund for 2003/04 FY.*
9. 2003/04 Nevada County Transportation Capital Improvement Program: *Authorized staff to include the 2003/04 Nevada County CIP into the RTIP.*

Motion made by Commissioner Guerra to approve the consent items. Commissioner Sutherland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5 to 0.

#### ACTION ITEMS:

10. Allocation Request from Grass Valley: Through the adoption of Resolution 03-45, Grass Valley is requesting an allocation of \$216,114 from the Local Transportation Fund for transit and paratransit services for FY 2003/04.

A motion was made by Commissioner Guerra to adopt Resolution 03-20. Commissioner Bedwell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5 to 0.

Commissioner Krage asked if the claim for specific amounts for Gold Country Stage and Paratransit Services were locked in or if there was flexibility in changing the amounts used for each of the operations. Executive Director Landon responded that the city's claim and resolution identified \$99,068 for paratransit services and \$117,046 for transit. These amounts matched the County's budget that specified these amounts for each operation. He noted that an allocation may be rescinded or revised if 1) it was determined that the claimant was about to spend the money in a manner that would be inconsistent with the claim; or 2) if the claimant came back to the Commission expressing a need for the money that was different from the time that they made the claim and requested a modification. Mr. Landon stated that the Commission could entertain a request from the claimant to change their claim.

Executive Director Landon explained that adopting Resolution 03-20 approved allocating the funds on behalf of the City for transit and paratransit services.

Mr. Mark Calhoun, a member from the audience asked if the requests in actions items ten and eleven were to give all the TDA funds that were allocated from sales tax to the transportation commission.

Vice-Chairman Stevens responded it was not. The claims were for the 77.5% of the TDA funds and that the Joint Powers Agreement was still being negotiated.

11. Allocation Request from Nevada City: Through the adoption of Resolution 2003-26 and Resolution 2003-27, Nevada City is requesting an allocation of \$54,569 from the Local Transportation Fund for transit and paratransit services for FY 2003/04.

A motion was made by Commissioner Krage to adopt Resolution 03-21. Commissioner Sutherland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5 to 0.

12. Amendment I to the 2003/04 Overall Work Program

Executive Director Landon suggested and Vice-Chairman Stevens agreed that in the interest of time this action item could be brought back to the next Commission meeting to enable Grant Johnson to provide his presentation on the proposed roundabout at Idaho Maryland and East Main Street in Grass Valley that was referred to in the Executive Director's report.

4. Continuation of Executive Director's Report:

#### IDAHO MARYLAND ROAD/EAST MAIN STREET INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Mr. Grant Johnson, PRISM Engineering, provided a computer simulation of the roundabout operations for the Idaho Maryland Road/East Main Street intersection, and noted the following:

- Caltrans won't approve installation of a signal at this location.
- The proposed roundabout will encroach on right-of-way owned by Hills Flat Lumber.
- The roundabout is a long-term solution that will accommodate future traffic volumes.

Mr. Landon stated that staff was working with the stakeholders that met with the City of Grass Valley last month. Mr. Johnson is updating his graphics to include the city's latest aerial photography and locations of the driveways that are adjacent to the proposed roundabout. He is also expanding the graphics to include Scandling Avenue to see how it will impact the intersection. The next stakeholder's meeting is for October 3<sup>rd</sup> where the graphics will be presented. The next step will be to develop a Concept Approval Report which Caltrans will need in order to review the roundabout and give their comments. Mr. Landon stated that he could not estimate when construction could begin.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mark Calhoun from Grass Valley stated that a meeting was held at the Yuba River Charter School about a week ago with Mr. Derrick and about forty parents and administrators attending. He asked the Commission if they were aware that the proposal from Mr. Derrick was to make the route entirely self-supporting. Vice-Chairman Stevens replied that the Operational Policy Committee gave direction and Route 7 had been stopped.

Mr. Calhoun stated his concerns regarding the proposed changes to the Gold Country Stage and stated they are trying to get a Grand Jury investigation of the whole process.



COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS:

No comments were made.

SCHEDULE FOR NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, October 15, 2003 at 8:30 a.m., at the Nevada City Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Commissioner Krage motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Guerra seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5 to 0.

The meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nancy D. Holman, Administrative Services Officer

Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Joshua J. Susman, Chairman  
Nevada County Transportation Commission